

Your Papa by **zombiecupcake**

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Summary:

Eleven and Hopper have an important conversation on their way back from Hawkins Lab.

Your Papa

Author's Note:

This is just a little one shot I came up with on a whim. I need some more Eleven/Hopper father/daughter moments. Not really sure how I feel about the final product but I hope you enjoy.

Typed up on my phone because my computer is sketchy so I apologize for any errors.

"I don't think you're a black hole, and you're nothing like Papa at all," Eleven says out of the blue. The truck had been so quiet before, that Hopper had almost jerked his hold on the steering wheel. Once they had managed enough strength to bring the lift up from the gate neither Hopper nor El had said much, too exhausted.

"Thanks Kid, glad you think so," Hopper replied once he had managed to absorb what she had said. Even though she didn't say the actual word, Hopper could easily recognize that this was El's way of saying she was sorry. He moved one of his hands from the steering wheel and mused her hair, happy for the small smile it drew from this clearly exhausted miracle of a child. "I'm sorry about what I said too. I think you have the right to be a brat sometimes, after everything you've been through." He told her moving to take her small hand in his and giving it a small affectionate kiss before returning his hand to the wheel.

There was a long comfortable pause afterwards but then Hopper cleared his throat and shifted a little in his seat. "And I mean sometimes. Not all the time." He said in his stern Chief voice, though the effect was lost as soon as the Chief cracked a smile and gave a small chuckle. "Then again, I guess I could try and be less strict. A compromise, I try to give you more freedom and you try and behave better. How about that? Hmmm? Half way happy." Hopper declared, thinking it would hopefully be a little easier, as well as safer to allow Eleven some of the freedom she so desperately craved as long as Owens helped him out. "Remember?" Hopper asked, taking his eyes off the road to look at El when she gave no answer to his

proposition.

When he looked over she wasn't looking at him. Her hands were in her lap, her fingers fidgeting and her gaze was locked on them like she was watching some sort of life or death battle.

"Kid? Hey, what's wrong?" Hopper asked concerned as he once again removed his hand from the steering wheel, this time to place his fingers under her chin, forcing her gaze up to meet his own.

"I can stay? We can go home? Forever?" Eleven questioned and it shocked Hopper so bad that he suddenly swirled the truck, pulling over onto the shoulder of the road so he could turn to look at her. As soon as the blazer was parked, Hopper could see there were tears tracking down Eleven's face. Had she really thought that she wasn't going to stay with him? Hadn't she already cleared the air on their drive to Hawkins lab?

"What are you talking about? Of course you can stay. You're stuck with me for good Kid. Just because we had a fight doesn't mean that the cabin isn't still your home," when Eleven flinched, Hopper grew more frustrated. Had he done something to lead Eleven to believe that she wouldn't be welcome?

"The gate is closed. No more Upside Down, no more bad men," El explained as if it were obvious. However she must have been able to read the look of pure confusion on Hopper's face because she continued. "I protect, I feed and I teach," Eleven said as she ticked off each item on her fingers as she repeated Hopper's words back to him from the day of their fight.

"You don't need to protect me. Aunt Becky and Mama could feed and teach now," she said, though the last bit came out more like a question rather than a statement of fact.

Hopper suddenly felt like his whole world was crashing. He was finding out about Sara's cancer all over again. Even after finding out that she had found her mother and aunt, the idea that she would want to live with them had never really occurred to him. Hopper had thought of it more like a field trip, just like when she had gone to visit the Wheeler boy without telling him.

“Is that what you want, Kid? Do you want to live with your Mama and Aunt Becky?” It broke his heart to ask. To allow even for the possibility of Eleven leaving to become a reality, but he knew it had to be done. Though it would hurt more than those vines chocking the life out of him in those tunnels, Hopper knew that if El really wanted to live with her mom and aunt her would take her.

El should be allowed to be with her mother. And why wouldn’t she want to be with Terry and Becky? Now that it was out in the open, Hopper couldn’t believe that he hadn’t thought it a possibility before. This girl had spent her whole life without even knowing she had a family. Of course she would want to be with them. They were blood. All Hopper was was a coffee drinking, cigarette smoking police Chief who yelled at her and kept her caged away from her friends for almost a year.

“No.”

“What?” Hopper has been so wrapped up in his guilt and grief that he didn’t even register that Wl has spoken right away.

“No, that’s not what I want,” El repeated, her voice sounding confident, her eyes meeting his with unwavering determination. “I want to go home. To our home,” she told him and suddenly Hopper felt like her could breath again.

“You’re sure Kid? It’s ok if you do. She’s your mom and Becky is your aunt. They’re family,” Hopper told her wanting to make sure this was what she really wanted. It want that he wanted to push her away, or even keep her at arms length, he had learned his lesson. On the contrary, he wanted to pull her right into his chest and nestle her right next to her heart. He knew however that if he did that there would be no chance of letting her go. His rib cage would close around her and seal her there for good. Forever.

“But you could be my new Papa,” Eleven said quietly, her gaze shifting can down to her lap as she said it. “Joyce is like another Mama. And my friends, I want to be with them, too.” She told him. Her words came out broken, a clear sign she was nervous and unsure how to translate what she felt into words. Another thing Hopper knew they would have to work on. He still hadn’t even repaired the

windows in the cabin.

“Your new Papa, huh?” Hopper asked with a smile. He knew when she said it this time she didn’t mean he would treat her like that son of a bitch Bronner. She meant it in the truest sense of the word, and Hopper suddenly realized that the stars were a bit brighter and the truck felt a little warmer. “That’s what you want? Me to be your Papa? You’d be my girl lie Sara is?” Hopper asked her, laying his hand on her cheek and using his thumb to clear away what blood remained on her face.

“Yes,” Eleven said immediately, nodding her head with vehemence, causing Hoppers hand to move with it.

Hopper couldn’t help but laugh before he leaned over and wrapped his arm around her shoulders and pulled her to him I. A side hug, pressing a kiss to the top of her head. “Alright Kid, whatever you want,” he told her, then giving her another squeeze he released her to shift the truck and move it back out onto the road.

They drove on once again in a comfortable solve for a few minutes, however Hopper could feel Eleven’s gaze on him the whole time. He rolled his eyes before turning his head quickly to catch her own before returning them to the winding road. “Go ahead Kid, say it. I know you want to. Might as well get used to it,” he told her almost instinctively knowing what it was that was eating her up now.

El gave a tooth smile then looked down a moment clearly embarrassed at being caught. However her excitement didn’t allow it to last long.

“Papa,” she said with sheer joy as she reached out with her own hand and lightly patted his bearded cheek.

Hopper chuckled a little and shook his head good naturedly. “Yeah, that’s me. You’re Papa.”

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